



Stella's Update, December 15, 2018

An update from Tore Sohlberg and Lehla Abreder, owners of Stella's Cafe & Bakery

Stella's requested that People First HR Services conduct a review to provide a thorough and impartial third-party view of our workplace. We also asked for recommendations to support our commitment to providing a respectful, safe, supportive and healthy work environment for our staff.

That review is now complete and details of the process and results are as follows:

1 – Process

The review period spanned approximately four weeks. Several methods were used to collect data, including reviewing existing documentation, interactions with current employees and interviews with former employees. As well, the review process included:

- An on-site human resources consultant present at each Stella's restaurant for a week to speak with staff and support them.
- Respectful Workplace Training completed with more than 400 of our managers and staff, during which everyone was encouraged to provide feedback and direction to inform the development of a single, new, Respectful Workplace Policy for Stella's.
- Confidential 24-hour voicemail and email contact channels provided for current and former staff to submit feedback.

In all, 44 current and former staff provided feedback via the confidential feedback line/email.

2 – Findings

Overall, diverse feedback detailed incidents carried out by co-workers and managers that caused a negative impact to some employees. A number of the incidents reported involved managers and executives who are no longer with the organization.

In terms of specifics, the following were identified as areas requiring attention:

- An enhanced and well-defined process for handling confidential complaints must be established and properly supported.
- Insufficient training in leadership and operational policies in some instances led to inconsistent employee experiences and policy enforcement.
- Clearer guidelines required on tip-out, breaks and shift trading are required.

- Inconsistent, decentralized communications contributed to some staff feeling uninformed on how decisions were made, unsure as to how to progress or develop in their roles.

While the review uncovered that a majority of employees feel a deep commitment to Stella's and believed their workplace culture was strong and positive, they also understood that not all their co-workers had that same experience.

3 – Recommendations

As a result of the review and recommendations, Stella's will take the following actions:

- We are in the process of establishing a human resources department that reports directly to us and is responsible for implementing a new structure to improve communications and training.
- We have implemented policy revisions to reduce confusion, and ensure transparency in operational procedures by centralizing employee communications.
- We have and will conduct regular operational training with all supervisors and managers to ensure all policies and procedures are consistently and fairly applied.
- We will be developing a leadership training program for all leaders to ensure proficiency in performance management, coaching and employee development.
- We are redesigning restaurant assessment processes with a balanced scorecard that includes financial, people and quality measures.
- We are establishing an employee culture committee that liaises directly with the owners of the company.

In addition to the operational and policy changes outlined above, Stella's has also taken the following actions related specifically to personnel:

- Released Grant Anderson, Vice-President of Operations, from employment at Stella's Cafe and Bakery as of Dec. 5, 2018
- Released Brad Burrows, Regional Manager, from employment at Stella's Cafe and Bakery as of Dec. 14, 2018

Media interview note:

We thank media in advance for any requests, but we are confident that this statement, as well as past statements we've released will satisfy information requirements. Accordingly, Stella's owners will not be providing interviews; nor will People First HR Services with regards to Stella's.